

**Town of Presque Isle
Economic Development Committee Minutes
Tues. 3.27.18 Meeting**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Bonnie Byrnes at 2:01pm. Present were committee members: Bonnie Byrnes, Brenda Dyre, Beth Marohn, Mary Watkins, Christine Wolter, Chamber Liaison Sarah Johnson, and Town Board Liaison Carl Wolter. Absent with notice: Chuck Hayes.

Guests present: residents Steve and Debbie Smith, Vilas EDC representative Barry McLean, and UW-Extension representative Chris Starks.

A motion to approve the agenda as presented by Christine, second by Beth. All aye. Motion passed. A motion to approve the 2.27.18 minutes by Christine, second by Beth. All aye. Motion passed. No chair remarks. Finance report shows 2018 balance at \$1225.81

New Business:

- A. The committee discussed where to store holiday decorations. Bonnie will contact Chairman Reckard to inquire as to town garage space. Brenda could provide storage if Town is unable. It was noted that next year, all on/in rental properties should be communicated with to assure acceptance of decorations. The committee will meet on Thursday, April 5th at 9am at Headwaters Real Estate to take down and store decorations. Bring large boxes, bags, and anything else to help.
- B. At the last meeting, it was suggested the Town/EDC look into established mountain bike/fat-tire bike trails on WDNR lands near South Crab Lake Road. Steve Smith agreed to reach out to WDNR to inquire as to process/possibility.
- C. At the last meeting, it was suggested the Town/EDC look into a couple of free-use kayaks and canoes at Sensebrenner Park. This was tabled, as the committee will wait to see what the Town Board does with the idea via the Recreational Immunity statute. Parks Liaison Cathy Weber noted the Parks 'N Rec is interested in something similar at Pipke Park. The committees may want to work together on this issue in the future, getting items donated, etc.
- D. At the last meeting, it was suggested the EDC sponsor a program for the community from Quita Sheehan, Vilas County Land & Water Conservation Department "Valuing Vilas County's Water Resources." Quita is available and interested, and puts on at no charge. She asked for potential times/days. The committee suggested June 5th or 6th at 3pm. Sarah will reach out to check on her availability, as well as on community room availability. Bonnie suggested the committee provide light refreshments.

Old Business:

A. Downtown Planning:

- A. The contract with Ayres & Associates, and \$10,000 of Room Tax, was approved by the Town Board at the March 1, 2018 meeting. Following the meeting and prior to sending off signed contract and payment, Chairman Reckard sent the contract to the Town lawyer for review. He reported the

lawyer has some issues with the contract, although he did not yet know what these were. He indicated he would let our committee know. Town Liaison Carl Wolter will follow up on this item at the next Town board meeting on April 5th if we haven't heard back yet. The committee is hoping for quick action on this so the timeline for the work with Ayres can be set, and the public can be notified of input opportunities. The hopeful timeline is April-June or May-July.

Assuming all to move forward, the committee discussed the development of an ad hoc stakeholder committee. Town residents Steve Smith and John MacLean will serve, as will EDC members Bonnie Byrnes, Christine Wolter, Sarah Johnson, and Mary Watkins; Town Board liaison Carl Wolters; and Vilas EDC representative Barry McLean. It was noted a member from Parks 'N Rec should also be invited. Sarah will send out an invitation to Chair Barofsky.

- B. Additional funds are due Ayres for the contract, in the amount of \$1338. This exceeds what is currently available in the EDC budget. The committee will raise the additional funding over the coming months. Mary offered to contact Trigs about possible brat stand sales.

- B. Connect Communities Program: The EDC would like to introduce the [Connect Communities](#) program to the Town for their consideration/approval. There are two application times: Spring and Fall and an application along with a \$200 fee would need to be submitted. The EDC would provide funding for the \$200, with a private donation to be graciously provided by Steve and Debbie Smith. Boulder Junction and Manitowish Waters are "Connect Communities", and Land O Lakes is considering it. Reports from Boulder Junction are that it is a worthwhile program, and that it provides positive networking and greater access and knowledge of funding opportunities. Chris shared the survey Boulder Junction sent to their residents to gain more insight into what their community needs/wants and also had the results which she will send out to the committee as an FYI. Commitments for the program include two individuals within the community to attend webinars (for which the EDC would assure attendance), along with an annual report. Chris made a motion to recommend the Town of Presque Isle apply to become a Connect Community, with the \$200 fee covered via the EDC, and with the EDC to fill out the application on behalf of the Town with the Town as final signatory. Brenda seconded. All aye. Motion passed. Chris volunteered to be the EDC representative to speak at the next meeting as she has done the lion's share of the work and research on this program. She will also pass along the application, once received, for the Town Board's review. Sarah will contact Marshall/Lorine about getting onto the 4/5 Town Board agenda.

C. Broadband

- A. Broadband Forward Community: this was presented to the Town Board (it is a designation that shows the Town wants to work towards improved broadband). There is no fee. This issue was referred to the Zoning Committee and will be back on the Town Board agenda at the April 5 meeting.
- B. Survey Print-Insertion Costs: the committee supports the expenditure of ~\$225 to print and place a half-page survey in all taxpayer's mailboxes. Final cost will be presented at the next meeting. This will be included in the Chamber's early

May mailing for return by late May. The results will help to identify needs, and potentially to support future grant funding.

C. Broadband survey questions were reviewed and all support them as presented:

Town of Presque Isle

Economic Development Committee Broadband Survey

Return to PO Box 130, Presque Isle, WI 54557 by May 31, 2018

1. Do you have internet service in Presque Isle? Y/N If so, through what provider? _____
2. Are you satisfied with your available connection speed? Y/N
3. What is the fastest speed available to your location? Note: if you're unsure, your provider can supply that information. _____ Mbps
4. *For Centurylink customers only*, has your service been upgraded this year? Y/N Are you satisfied with the upgrade? Y/N Why/not? _____

5. If another service becomes available, would you consider changing providers? Y/N
6. Are you interested in seasonal service packages (e.g., summer-only service)? Y/N

While we don't need names, we are requesting locations. Please provide the road your home or business resides on. The more specific, the better (i.e. fire number or a nearby intersection). All information will be kept confidential, and shared with a prospective internet provider for assessment purposes only. Location: _____

Do you own more than 4-5 acres of land, and would you be willing to consider hosting a tower in order to bring wireless internet service into your area? Y/N If so, please provide your name, address, and contact on the reverse so your property can be assessed for usability.

D. Panfish Project Update: We received an unfavorable call from WNDR Secretary Meyer, but he indicated he was still working on it. Chamber Director Scott McPherson and Bonnie will follow-up on this. The fish are to be taken out in May and still need a home. We would like to understand exactly where the hold-up with the Department of Agriculture is. It was questioned whether this could be pursued in future years (yes), and whether another lake to place the fish had since been identified (no committee members believed this to be the case).

Public Comments: Chris Starks suggested we get in touch with Joe Lawniczak from WEDC regarding the downtown planning project, as a resource. He also reported on a survey/grant centered around Eagle River area and noted that business owners are recognizing workforce to be one of the greatest issues for business success. He also noted there is job growth in housekeeping and food service. Also discussed was costs of living as it relates to the job incomes available from hospitality jobs.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, April 24 at 2:30pm.

Adjournment: Beth made a motion to adjourn at 3:20pm. Mary seconded. All aye.
Meeting adjourned.